

For Canada, the cent plan shrinks, then disappears

By Roger Boye

THE 1978 CANADIAN cent won't be shrunk in size after all, Royal Canadian Mint directors decided late last month.

Operators of Canadian vending machines strongly objected to the plan to make the cent smaller than the Canadian (or United States) dime because they discovered that such a tiny cent could have been used in place of a dime in some machines. Also, the Toronto subway system would have been forced to purchase expensive detection equipment for turnstiles since the smaller cent was to be the same size as a 50-cent Toronto subway token.

Mint directors now plan to give the small-cent proposal the careful study it should have gotten months ago, and meanwhile, they will continue minting cents with a diameter of 19 millimeters, the same as U. S. cents. The mint chiefs had wanted to make the change to save metal and production costs.

A PHILADELPHIA dealer has reported seeing a series 1977 upside-down \$1 bill, proving that the bugs still aren't out of the equipment used to print U. S. currency.

Series 1977 bills were put into circulation starting last autumn, and this latest error bill is believed to have been printed just three months ago. (The serial numbers, Treasury seal, and Federal Reserve seal are upside down.) Error bills of series 1974 have been turning up in circulation for more than a year, but this is the first series 1977 upside-down bill.

Incidentally, a Chicago dealer said

his firm purchased, in mid-January, a series 1977 bill with a blank reverse.

THE MORTON GROVE Coin Club has been editorially praised by Numismatic News, a weekly coin newspaper, for "promoting numismatic education" by distributing the new American Numismatic Association coin grading book.

Club members who attended the December meeting received a free copy of the book, which retails for \$5.95, said outgoing club president Louis Goldstein.

The club, one of the most active in the Chicago area, meets at 8 p. m. on the third Friday of each month at the Park District Building, 6834 Dempster St., in the suburb. The new president is William Lovelace.

TWO COLLECTORS from a western suburb, Al and Gerda Birkholz, have won the Ambassador Award given several times annually by Numismatic News for service to the hobby.

The collectors, who are members of several coin organizations, present frequent talks to Chicago-area coin clubs and have written for coin publications.

"We've got three lectures scheduled in February," Birkholz said, explaining that the talks usually concern items they collect, such as trade dollars, coins of the German empire, and George Washington medals. (They keep their collection in a safe-deposit box for security reasons.)

Birkholz said he has been collecting for about 30 years. "When Gerda married me 20 years ago, she decided to become a collector, too. I guess it was one of those 'if you can't beat it, join it' things."